The Oregonian

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GOP LEGISLATION

THUMBS-UP TO TAX OVERHAUL

Vice President Mike Pence had every reason to be positive as the GOP tax bill was poised to clear the Senate and near final approval. *Alex Brandon, Associated Press*

It takes longer than expected, but Senate approval expected as the bill advances

Jubilant Republicans pushed on into early Wednesday to the verge of the most sweeping rewrite of the nation's tax laws in more than three decades, a deeply unpopular bill they insist Americans will learn to love when they see their paychecks in the new year. President Donald Trump cheered the lawmakers on, eager to claim his first major legislative victory.

But ...: Even as the House passed the bill and the Senate was poised to do the same, it turns out the House will need to vote again Wednesday after the Senate parliamentarian rules several provisions must be stripped.

What it will do: It lowers the tax rate for the richest Americans from 39.6 to 37 percent, lowers the corporate tax rate from 35 to 21 percent, repeals a portion of the Affordable Care Act and doubles the per-child tax credit. It also clears the way for drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and adds $1.46 trillion to the debt.

Timeline: The changes would go into effect next year (so, the return you do in 2019). The corporate cut is permanent; the individual cuts expire in 2026.

Rep. Greg Walden's reaction: "I don't think we've done a good job messaging. Now, you're able to look at the final product."

Tax legislation

In the House: Republicans survive 12 defections to pass the tax overhaul bill, 227-203.
In the Senate: Senators vote to remove three provisions and are expected to approve the bill on a straight party-line vote, 51-48.
Back in the House: The Senate-approved version is expected to pass the House on Wednesday morning and head to President Donald Trump.
Inside: Analyzing the tax overhaul. **A11**

DERAILMENT

Train inquiry could take 18 months

Elliot Njus *The Oregonian/OregonLive*

Investigators will remain in Washington state for a week or more as they gather evidence in Monday's passenger train derailment near Olympia, and they don't anticipate releasing the likely cause of the crash before they leave.

Nonetheless, the National Transportation Safety Board "go-team" dispatched to DuPont, Washington, is making significant progress, member Bella Dinh-Zarr said at a Tuesday afternoon news conference.

New details emerged about the crash, the investigation and efforts to reopen southbound lanes of Interstate 5.

Zack Willhoite and Jim Hamre — both rail enthusiasts — were identified as two of three people killed. Willhoite worked for Pierce Transit, the public transportation agency for Pierce County, Washington. Hamre was a retired civil engineer who had worked for the Washington State Department of Transportation.

The train derailment occurred at 7:34 a.m. during the inaugural run of a new Amtrak Cascades route intended to speed the trip between Seattle and Portland. In addition to the three killed, 70 people were taken to hospitals, including 10 with serious injuries. The derailment spilled cars from an overpass onto I-5, tying up traffic since.

The Washington State Department of Transportation offered no estimate for when southbound I-5 would reopen

SEE TRAIN, A10

RECRUITING INFLUENCE

Nike execs recommend players to Ducks

Brad Schmidt
The Oregonian/OregonLive

Two high-ranking basketball executives at Nike have offered recruiting advice to the University of Oregon, recommending players and regions for the Ducks to target, according to public records released Tuesday to The Oregonian/OregonLive.

Oregon Coach Dana Altman received one email in 2014 from a Nike executive calling for the Ducks to recruit more aggressively in Canada. That email came from George Raveling, a respected college basketball coach turned Nike executive, who in 2010 suggested that Oregon hire Altman.

In April 2017, Altman received an email from a second Nike executive who highlighted two prospects the Ducks could recruit. It came from Lynn Merritt, a Nike official perhaps best known for his role managing basketball megastar LeBron James' brand.

The Oregon coach responded to both messages within minutes, records show. Altman thanked Merritt for identifying the players. He assured Raveling after his 2014 email that Oregon would "keep looking north" in its search for talent.

The emails do not suggest any impropriety by officials at Nike or Oregon. But the records show that Nike executives have the ear and confidence of Altman, who helped guide Oregon to a historic Final

SEE NIKE, A9

SPORTS

Big day looms for UO, OSU

Oregon's Mario Cristobal, OSU's Jonathan Smith begin signing their first recruits Wednesday. **B1**

FOOD

A feast fit for Christmas Eve

Before you dive into Christmas dinner, try out the Feast of Seven Fishes the night before. **C6**

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